

6/2/08 EFC Minutes

EFC Members Present: Representatives Ferland, Cloutier, Converse, Gottling, Donovan

Other Delegation Members Present: Representative Rodeschin

County Officials, Employees Present: Sullivan County Health Care (SCHC) Administrator Purdy, Acting County Administrator Chainis, Commissioner Jarvis

The chair, Representative Ferland, called the meeting to order at 11:35 a.m. EFC began by reviewing Nursing Department salaries and benefits with Mr. Purdy, particularly specific budget items relating to new staffing numbers. Rep. Donovan commented that he hadn't heard "a single complaint" about the quality of care provided at the SCHC within the last 6 months.

Mr. Purdy stated that his long-term goal is to hire a nursing staff totally our own which means hiring about 15 new people. In the meantime, he asked that \$256,283 be added to the agency nursing line items. **This reflects the difference between the previous budget figures that kept the number of FTE's needed but budgeted for fewer while adding appropriations to the Contract Nursing line and the present budget figures.** Rep. Converse moved, seconded by Gottling, to accept the new budget worksheet that Mr. Purdy distributed to the EFC on May 30, 2008. The motion was approved on a unanimous division vote.

The chair began to review Marketing Department budget line items under SCHC with Mr. Purdy. Rep. Cloutier interrupted to ask if a discussion to cut non-union employee salary increases from 3% to 1.5% was in order at this time. A discussion ensued. Mr. Purdy said limiting salaries might hamper his ability to attract high-quality staff. Discussion continued about the union contract currently being negotiated by County Attorney Hathaway, Mr. Purdy, and Human Resources **Director** Farrand.

In response to Rep. Gottling's question about union employees paying more for the same health insurance and other benefits, Mr. Chanis said there are higher costs for dealing with unionized employees. Mr. Purdy said he thought non-union employees would like to be recognized and rewarded for their hard work. Mr. Purdy reviewed that number of union and non-union employees in the departments of SCHC.

The chair recessed for lunch at 1:10 p.m. and resumed the meeting at 1:50 p.m. Rep. Franklin entered the meeting at 1:52 p.m.

The EFC began a review of the Department of Corrections (DOC) capital improvement budget, specifically lighting and security upgrades at the House of Correction. Mr. Chanis stated that Superintendent Ross Cunningham believes the lighting and security upgrades on pages 43-44 of the Commissioners' Budget Notes are the minimum capital improvements that should be approved for FY 2009. The EFC discussed the DOC's staff budget and the listed positions.

Rep. Converse moved, seconded by Gottling, to eliminate the four additional Community Corrections officer positions for the Transitional Housing Unit (THU). These positions would provide 24-hour coverage at the THU. Discussion on the motion followed. **Mr. Chanis noted that Mr. Cunningham was not present and intended to come to the next EFC meeting to discuss the staffing increase request.** Rep. Gottling withdrew her second, but Rep. Converse refused to withdraw his motion. Rep. Cloutier moved, seconded by Gottling to table Rep. Converse's motion. The motion was approved 4 – 1.

The chair adjourned the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

Rep. John Cloutier

Acting Clerk